

Getting Pumped!



As part of the Water for the Future initiative, last week DEP installed three vertical turbine pumps that will be used to empty the Delaware Aqueduct for the first time since the 1950s. Each of the vertical pumps weighs more than nine tons and stands roughly 23 feet tall. Six centrifugal, submersible pumps will also be installed. The

nine pumps together are capable of removing roughly 80 million gallons of water from the tunnel each day. It is anticipated that the tunnel will be emptied over a period of two weeks in the year 2021 to allow for the connection of a bypass tunnel that will move water around a section of the existing aqueduct that is cracked and leaking.

Spotlight on Safety

Safety Starts With Me – Ergonomics

Ergonomic injuries have developed into a costly occupational health problem and are the focus of the final week of the National Safety Month 2013 campaign. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, ergonomic injuries accounted for 33% of all workplace injuries and illnesses requiring days away from work in 2011.

The goal of ergonomics is to reduce stress and eliminate injuries and disorders associated with the overuse of muscles, bad posture, and repeated tasks. Common examples of ergonomic risk factors are found in jobs requiring repetitive, force-

ful, or prolonged exertions of the hands, frequent or heavy lifting, pushing, pulling, or carrying heavy objects, and prolonged awkward postures.

The development of guidelines to reduce stress and eliminate injuries and disorders is essential to preventing workplace musculoskeletal disorders. DEP's Ergonomics Policy helps to recognize and control ergonomic hazards and ensure a safe work environment for all employees. For a more comprehensive look at the policy and associated responsibilities see the [DEP Ergonomics Policy](#).

At DEP, everyone is responsible for safety. If you or anyone on your team is concerned about your working conditions, it's okay to ask your supervisor or your bureau's EHS liaison how they can help. If you've still got questions, you can call the EHS Employee Concerns Hotline. It's DEP's responsibility to acknowledge and fix unsafe situations, procedures, and practices. With your help, we'll not only get the job done, we'll make it safer for ourselves, our coworkers, our families, and our city. CALL (800) 897-9677 OR SEND A MESSAGE THROUGH PIPELINE. HELP IS ON THE WAY. 🐾

Special Guest Commissioner's Corner

James Roberts, Deputy Commissioner of the Bureau of Water and Sewer Operations, is a guest commentator this week.

We are just four days into summer and the city is already experiencing what will likely be the first official heat wave of the year. In New York City there are lots of ways to beat the heat. The City has opened hundreds of cooling centers, our beaches are open to bathers, and this Thursday the Parks Department will open 55 public pools around the five boroughs. For decades New Yorkers have also relied on our fire hydrants as a source of summertime recreation and a way to cool off on the hottest days of the year. I would like to take this opportunity to remind everyone that opening fire hydrants without an approved spray cap is illegal, wasteful, and dangerous.

Illegally opened fire hydrants can lower water pressure and put lives at risk if there is a fire. Children can also be at risk because the powerful force of an illegally opened hydrant can knock kids down causing serious injury, or worse, push them into traffic. One illegally opened fire hydrant can release more than 1,000 gallons of water each minute.

Fortunately, there is a safe and legal way for New Yorkers to cool off with help from a fire hydrant. During the summer months the City provides free authorized spray caps at local fire houses which can be obtained by any



adult 18 years or older. The spray caps only release between 20-25 gallons of water each minute, which is plenty to cool off without putting people at risk of being injured.

Since 2007, we have partnered with students to help get the word out about the dangers of illegally opening fire hydrants. In early July, our Hydrant Education Action Teams—or HEAT teams—will hit the streets at community events, parades, greenmarkets, and libraries to educate New Yorkers about this important issue.

Illegally opening fire hydrants is a serious matter. It can result in a fine of up to \$1,000, imprisonment for up to 30 days, or both. But worse, it puts our residents and our firefighters in harms way. I encourage everyone to do your part and report illegally opened fire hydrants to 311 immediately. With your help we can ensure an enjoyable and safe summer for all New Yorkers.

Kudos Corner

Last week, Deputy Commissioner **Zoe Ann Campbell** and Director of Employee Benefits **Arlene Siegel-Fishman** represented DEP at the New York Blood Center Recognition Ceremony in Flushing Meadows Park. During the ceremony, DEP was presented with the Platinum Award for the collection of 1,651 pints of blood during the 2012 drives. And, we are well on our way to another successful year; during the recently completed June blood drive we collected an additional 616 pints.

Thanks to all DEP donors for their participation in making our drives hugely successful!

Focus on the Field



When they are not analyzing the legal aspects of purchasing land around reservoirs in the upstate watersheds, Ulster County residents **May Chin** and **Gail Buchman** work on myriad projects to protect the water supply, enforce water protection rules, and provide the public with access to City-owned lands.

"The nature of our work is that we do a little of everything," Buchman said. "The work is so diverse that no two days are ever the same."

Buchman and Chin are both assistant counsels in the Bureau of Legal Affairs, working out of the Kingston office. After leaving her job as a litigator in New York City, Buchman began working for DEP in 1999 as one of the first lawyers located full-time in the watershed. Chin joined the department in 2003 after leaving her law practice in Flushing, Queens.

Both play key roles in DEP's land acquisition program, which helps to protect the drinking water for 9 million New Yorkers by purchasing land and easements around the upstate reservoirs and the streams, creeks and other bodies of water that feed into them. Between fee ownership and easements, DEP has protected nearly 130,000 acres in the watershed.

Buchman oversees the purchase of easements, which sometimes include complex provisions that allow for the continuation of activities, such as logging in the Catskills, under negotiated terms and conditions. Chin handles contracts and closings for properties that DEP acquires in fee—a job

that sometimes requires a tedious hunt for antique records.

"Having a full understanding of the City's property holdings sometimes requires digging up records that are more than 100 years old," Chin said.

The full extent of their jobs, however, includes more than just land transactions. Buchman and Chin also handle special projects with DEP partners in the watersheds. Those projects range from allowing community groups to use City-owned properties for ball fields and fundraisers, to analyzing agreements with nonprofits that use City funding to bolster economic development projects and build wastewater treatment plants.

"DEP's work stretches from the Catskills to Staten Island and having talented lawyers like Gail and May in the watershed allows the Bureau of Legal Affairs to complete our important work in a timely manner," said Senior Environmental Counsel **Robin Levine**. "In addition, as watershed residents themselves, they bring a unique and helpful perspective to the many local issues that the department faces on a daily basis."

The legal issues sometimes become complicated. In one case, DEP had reached an agreement with companies to grow native plants that would be used to improve the strength of stream banks and help reduce turbidity in the water supply. The program called for three steps. The plants would start growing in a facility on Staten Island. Then they would be transferred to Syracuse, where they would grow even larger, and after that, DEP would receive them for planting along the stream banks.

However, the Syracuse company filed for bankruptcy while the plants were in its custody. Buchman remembers having to file a petition in court to make sure the City's assets—in this case the plants—were not counted as part of the company's estate and sold to satisfy its debts.



THE DEP EMPLOYEE STORE WILL BE ROLLING IN SOON

The Watershed Experience

As part of the ongoing effort to support local watershed economies, this past Saturday DEP hosted tourism agencies, businesses, and nonprofit groups from the Catskills at Brooklyn Bridge Park to introduce city residents to the numerous tourism destinations that are within a short drive of the five boroughs. "The Watershed Experience" featured businesses located in Delaware, Green, Sullivan, and Ulster counties that offer hiking, boating, fishing, lodging, farm-fresh food, concerts, festivals, shopping, and more. Click [here](#) to see more photos.



Dragon Boat Race 2013



The DEP Dragon Pipers are seeking two additional paddlers to join DEP's Dragon Boat Team. DEP will compete against other NYC agencies in the Hong Kong Dragon Boat Festival on Saturday, August 10 in Flushing Meadows Corona Park. Practices are Saturday afternoons from now until August 3. For more information contact Amanda Low (alow@dep.nyc.gov or 718-595-5239) or Andrew Ng (anng@dep.nyc.gov or 718-595-4737).

Welcome Aboard



Yesterday, 23 new employees attended orientation and received an overview of the department from Deputy Commissioner **Diana Jones Ritter**. We hope everyone will join us in welcoming them to DEP!

Rukshana Begum, **Umdat Bharat**, **Johnathan Botelho**, **Cody Cantalino**, **Osborne Canterbury**, **Shanika Carter**, **Johnny Chu**, **Willy Dorvil**, **Alan Graham**, **Keith Gushue**, **Alana S. Haddad-Friedman**, **Robert Mara Sr.**, **Herbert Powell**, **Everon Rampersad-Sumair**, **Vincent Saldivia**, **Michael P. Shpontak**, **Afton Simko**, and **John Smiley** with BWSO; **Sheetal Menka** and **Brandon Mitchell** with BEDC; **Jessica Dennis** and **Ron Weissbard** with BEPA; and **Christopher Clinton** with BEC.

We welcome your feedback! To submit an announcement or suggestion, please email us at: newsletter@dep.nyc.gov.